



## 72 Orchids

Lilly Hinckley

I will never need 72 orchids  
 but that's what I have  
 on the mantel in the living room  
 on the dining room table  
 on the bookshelves  
 on the window sills.  
 long and knobby, like skeleton fingers  
 reaching up  
 all of them waiting to die  
 by some forgetful hand  
 gifts from well-wishers  
 (\$16.99 at Target)  
 who believe  
 that temporary beauty  
 will make the disease die faster.  
 if they stayed long enough, they would know  
 72 orchids  
 cannot fight a war